

# FALSE CHARTERS

Entry No. 20 in Our Prize Story Competition

BY CHARLES FRANCIS BOURKE

**S**HIPS BOTTOM ahoy! Oh, Casco! Come up! I've got a message for you." Jack Carlin leaned out the window of the wireless tower and sent up a hail to Casco, keeper of Ships Bottom Life Saving Station, who stood at the foot of the sand dunes, gazing seaward at a passing Government ship, flying the barred flag of the Revenue Service at her gaff.

It was not a day for any ship to venture close to the dangerous reefs off Barnegat unless she had important business at hand. The wind blew in from the Atlantic in icy blasts, and inshore the ocean was piling up a long line of surf that promised work for the Ships Bottom men, whose duty it was to guard the coast in conjunction with the new wireless station the Government had established on the beach.

From the top of the sand dune where the basket-mast tower of the wireless was erected, he could look down on ocean and beach and the imminent Ships Bottom Station, where the round shouldered surfmen lounged about the boat-house.

Out beyond the station lay the rocks of Gridiron Reef, and to the southward, a rifleshot down, a single gray gull balanced inquiringly over the "Ships' Graveyard," as the beach folk called the broad strip of quivering quicksand that stretched out from the shore in a shimmering spearhead, barren of wreckage save for a ship's topmast still piercing its surface from a buried ship fathoms below. That spar disintegrating out there on the quicksand was all that remained of the good ship Carbonate, which flung herself bodily on the bar, only to sink to her topmast in the maw of the Graveyard, dragged underground by some mysterious, unseen power that dwelt in the quivering sands.

Carlin had reason to know that the coming of the revenue cutter concerned himself as well as the life savers. Casco, plodding through the sands, had something of the kind in mind; for he turned at the doorway to nod toward the white cruiser, flinging a long streamer of smoke shoreward as she made for open sea.

"I guess you know that's the Petrel, U. S. revenue cutter?" he said. "If some of your deep-sea wireless jokers try to fool us with any more S. O. S. messages, she'll deal you out short rations."

"They won't bother you again, anyway," Carlin rejoined. "That revenue cutter has just wirelessed orders that you're to stick to your station after this, calls or no calls. I reckon she's taken over the job herself. I've got to pass on all calls to her."

Casco nodded, a grim smile spreading over his weatherbeaten face. "Sure!" he said. "I knew that already."

"You knew it!" Carlin stared at him, not understanding.

"That revenue boat flagged it to me comin' down," Casco said coolly. "I reckon you didn't see me reading her signals through the glass. What I mean to say, Jack Carlin," the big Captain of Ships Bottom said emphatically, "I reckon them Petrel fellers an' us bul-lies thinks the same thing about them mysterious help signals that takes the boat off the beach, and leaves the coast clear, y' might say, for casual callers—such as duty dodgers, f'r instance."

Carlin stared blankly at the big surfman, a cold feeling of apprehension checking the hot retort on his lips. So Ships Bottom thought he was putting up a job on them! He had not thought of it that way before; but, after all, why shouldn't they doubt him!

**T**WICE within a fortnight the wireless call for help had come from the midnight sea, each time on a Friday, the last exactly one week before. Whether mischief or mystery lay at bottom, that blood stirring S. O. S., the universal call for help at sea, clicking



He Saw the Body Slowly Sinking Back in the Quicksand.

in on his instruments, had sent the Ships Bottom crew scuttling out on a bootless errand.

The Ships Bottom life savers did not object to answering calls for help at sea,—that was their business, as it was Carlin's to keep in touch with coasting vessels,—but they did object to being sent to sea of a wintry night on a wild goose chase after Flying Dutchmen. And so far that was the one thing the new beach patrol had accomplished.

Ships Bottom had not been very enthusiastic about the wireless patrol from the first. The life savers resented the innovation on general principles, just as they had objected to the new powerboat and the carbide torpedo rocket, until Sandy Hook and Bretons Point showed them that a six-cylinder *Helmet* motor could shoot a forty horsepower, twin screw "tanker" through a surf that would stand the old fashioned oarboat up on her tail, sand wagon and all. Ships Bottom discovered for itself that a line-carrying aerial torpedo would travel twice as far and carry her own Costen light out to sea to show Little Welsh, the gun firer, what a bad shot he could make on a cross wind, with sleet and sand in his eyes.

The wireless beach patrol was still in the experimental stage, and Ships Bottom had been selected for its tryout, because Barnegat Beach was admittedly the worst wrecking stretch from Maine to Florida; and the barren reaches of sand offered exceptional facilities for smuggling operations.

It was to meet these conditions that the Government had decided to install the new patrol as part of the machinery of the Revenue in its war on smugglers and shipwreckers. With all steamboats and most large sailing craft carrying wireless apparatus by Board of Trade law, and with a line of short-range wireless stations along the whole extent of the Atlantic Coast to report the movements of all passing vessels, the Government was working on the police principle that a ship's master, suspected or otherwise, would find it too haz-

ardous to engage in nefarious operations when the department could put its finger on any ship at any time.

If Ships Bottom crew had only known it, Carlin shared fully in their grouch against those "spook" calls. Jack Carlin was only *ex officio* a member of Ships Bottom,—rather too reedy in build for active work on Barnegat Beach,—but he had all of the department man's loyalty to the service. Now the thought that he was suspected of disloyalty to the service struck him like a blow from the big life saving Captain.

**B**Y George! You mean I've been reporting false calls for help for smuggling purposes?" he cried. "Why—if I can't prove I've been doing something more than hearing things, it'll mean my job!"

Casco shrugged his massive shoulders, and Carlin, impotently raging, sprang up, staring out after the departing revenue cutter now dwindling away to a shadowy speck on the misty ocean. He could communicate with her; but that would not help him with Casco. Casco thought him in cahoots with a gang of smugglers! Ships Bottom suspected him of having put up a job out of whole cloth, knowing the time his "confederate" was due! The charge was idiotic; and still—considering what had happened, the short range apparatus carried by the average coaster, and the similar low power of the Ships Bottom wireless, purposely so made to prevent complications or interference with more distant wireless calls—it would be quite possible for him to exchange signals with a passing coastwise steamer, without any distant wireless station or revenue cutter being any the wiser.

He was in the very position where a go-between would be most valuable. Unless he could clear his skirts, there was small shrift in store for him; for the Revenue,

which looks after the Life Saving Service, is also the marine policeman whose business it is to run down the smuggler of saccharine, and phenacetin, cigars, diamonds, and Celestial expatriates seeking sanctuary in the Chinatowns of the Atlantic seaboard.

**T**HE click of the instrument recalled Carlin to the imminent present. "S. O. S!" There it was right on time! He had felt it coming!

He noticed that Casco, who had lingered in the tower beyond his usual custom, moved close to the table as if striving to read the dots and dashes on the receiving tape. Perhaps he, Jack Carlin, was under espionage already—maybe a prisoner of Casco at that very moment! Had the Petrel solved the mystery?

A succession of crackles and dashes, as though the unseen sender was in desperate haste, followed:

Sighted revenue at sea. Have sent in smuggling—

Abruptly the message broke off. In passing subconscious feeling Carlin imagined he could see the operator's hand torn from the key that sent up the crashing volley of the ship's wireless out there on the murky ocean. Before he could throw on the power of his own sending apparatus, another call broke in; only this time Carlin smiled with grimly set jaw as he listened to the regular rhythmical voice of the cruiser—for it was the Petrel.

Pet. to S. B. Got call. Warn Ships Bottom coast guard. Following in ship showing no lights. S. B. Watch out. Warn Ships Bottom ship coming in—

"By George! there's a rocket! She is coming in! And she'll hit the deep-sea shallows! She's crowding her in!" Captain Casco, who had leaned forward as Carlin mechanically read aloud the message the warship was repeating, suddenly sprang away, making for the door. "That fool Flyin' Dutchman'll strike in a minute!" he roared.

Carlin sprang up from the window while he still lis-



tened to the small still voice that clicked into the ear telephones of his head harness. He saw Casco plunge down the sand dunes, and caught the blare of his deep voice, shouting orders which were drowned out by the clanging of Ships Bottom bell, the rumbling of the boathouse doors, and the rattle of oars thrown into the lifeboat.

**B**UT it was the flicker of lights and the tossing black shadow out on the sea that held Carlin's gaze. The scene, fitfully lighted by a storm-cloud moon, was under his eyes as on a darkened stage of a theater even as the wireless operator of the cutter told of the chase of the contrabandist—for there could be no doubt of the character of the steamship running inshore with darkened lights and approaching dangerously close to the outlying reefs of Ships Bottom.

"She'll hit the shallows off Ships' Graveyard, if she doesn't sheer off mighty soon!"

The rising wind was cold, bitter with the weight of a rousing levanter behind it; but it boomed in steadily, not in shipwrecking blasts. The cutter had stopped calling; instead, the hollow grunt of a gun told that she too saw the fugitive ship's danger. The smuggler was under the black shadow of the clouds; then for a hand's space the moon flared out. Carlin saw a patch of spectral gray crossing the dark waters, coming inshore—moonlight or a shred of sail torn from the incoming ship's sheet ropes. Was it?

At the same moment the fleeting steamer veered, just a second too late; for another deeper boom answered the cutter's gun. Out on the shallows the black ship suddenly stopped, a stream of fire and sparks from her funnel following inshore the ghostly gray object that had attracted Carlin's attention. Suddenly he set up a shout, his mind illuminated as though from the smuggler's fiery breath.

"Sending in smuggling—aéroplane! They're sending in smuggling goods by that aéroplane—that's what it is! That's what that operator tried to tell me—me or somebody else!"

The thought, wild and improbable as it seemed, struck home with a blow that brought conviction. The Revenue and the coast guard could form a blockade on the Atlantic seaboard that no ship could steal through; but they could build a barrier only by water and land; the filibuster and contrabandist had a free port of entry through the air. Little skill and less danger were involved in launching a self sustaining aéroplane, as safe on water as on land, and capable of carrying hundreds of pounds of highly dutiable goods; as the Government proposed to convey mail sacks from incoming liners. The Government itself had shown them the way, launching aéroplanes from warships to shore. And what better place than the sandy reaches of Barnegat Beach to serve as a safe landing place? Criminal agents are apt scholars, and false charters profitable.

One or two successful landings would mean a fortune. They could afford to lose their ship, once her smuggled stuff was safe ashore, or repeat, *ad infinitum*.

**T**HE whole possibility of the thing flashed through Carlin's mind as he peered eagerly at the fluttering thing, floating inshore like a scrap of mist cloud, hovering wraithlike now over the silvery gleam of the Ships' Graveyard.

"That's the Flying Dutchman, all right! That's the S. O. S. crook!" he cried triumphantly. "Maybe those other calls for help were false alarms; but this one isn't! We got her cornered this time!"

As he looked, the hovering aéroplane dropped. "On the quicksand, by George!" That was her finish, Carlin well knew.

A thin tongue of flame flickered up at sea from the stranded steamer's bow. "Destroying the evidence, that's what those fellows are at—burning the launching apparatus! Too late, Son!"

The whole scene was fairly before him as he ran down the sand dune to Ships Bottom Station, vainly shouting to Casco as he went. Captain Casco and his crew had their own work cut out for them in surf and sea and wind.

The aéroplane was his end of the business of rescue and capture. He sprang into the station after Casco's long brass telescope, bracing it against the jamb of the door as he swept the murky surface of the quicksand, a gunshot away, down beach.

"He's there yet! I can see him crawling on the thing, and he's good and plenty scared. He's close to that old

Carbonate's spar, flopping on the wings of the machine. I need that fellow in my business!"

Clear it was, from the smuggler's warning message, so abruptly blocked, that the wireless operator aboard was not in the plot, so daringly conceived, of launching a smuggling aéroplane over the last dangerous barrier from ship to shore. But Carlin needed the evidence of that man out there on the quicksand to clear himself from the charge of conspiracy.

Out in the center of the great sandy spearhead that thrust out into the ocean, the dismantled topmast of the buried ship loomed up, red in the reflection like a painted gallows' tree, its broken yardarm pointing accusingly downward to what Carlin knew was the wrecked aéroplane, where it had swooped suddenly down and come to grief in unexpected collision with the spar.

While he stood irresolute, a thin, wailing cry came inshore from the sands. That settled it! That frozen wretch out there wanted help!

He found a lantern in the boathouse, together with a coil of lifeline. There was no time to lose if he would reach the patch of solid footing round the Carbonate's spar. It was cruel, slow work, picking his way, veering to right or left as the sands gripped his ankles, striving to pull him under at each false step. He was half blinded by the salt spray, and once a big roller washing in from the ocean, waist high, swept him from his feet. It was only by flinging himself flat on the miry path that he managed to squirm to a hummock of seaweed. All around the silvery gray sands bubbled and quaked as though heaved up by some monstrous mole. He was soaked to the skin and chilled to the bone by the icy wind. It cut through him like knives; but Carlin struggled on.

**H**OW he reached it he did not know; but when he again faced the pelting sand and spray, wallowing on the outer edge of the seaweed that alone interposed between him and a hideous death, his outstretched hand gripped the framework of one of the airship's broken planes. The aéroplane had struck the old sentinel spar in full flight. The long wings were wrapped round the mast. The rest was a tangle of wires and splintered framework. A cylindrical object, the aéroplane's pontoon float, was broken off and lay nosing the foot of the mast. And—yes!—a crumpled form beyond sent him scrambling madly over the wreckage.

"He got it! I knew he'd got it! And he's gone!"

It was the man he sought—lying half engulfed in the glutinous, quivering maw, with head and shoulders out of the sand, one upflung arm clutching the shelving bank. Even as Carlin looked he saw the body slowly sinking back in the sand, the head in its leather cap rolled on one side, and the white face stared up at him, smeared with blood from a jagged cut in the temple.

As Carlin sprang down to him, the man struggled feebly to release himself, turning a ghastly smile up at the haggard, hatless apparition in peajacket and brass buttons who bent over him, lashing a lifeline round his body under the armpits.

"Got me, didn't you?" he said. "I gave 'em a run for their money first, just the same, even if you caught me with the goods!" He flicked his hand feebly toward the wreckage. It was the last spasm of strength.

Jack Carlin had no use for smugglers. But, facing death, as he thought, he could not help the thrill a brave man feels for a brave man.

As Carlin struggled back on the hummock, dragging the body clear of the sand, something whined past his ear, and a faint crack came from inshore. Another warning bullet ricocheted on the ironwork of the mast and departed with a vicious scream into the air.

"By George! he's shooting at us! It's that fool coast guard, Jim Bronson! He's smoking me up for a smuggler!"

Carlin knew what had happened. "Bronson saw that aéroplane settle down, and tumbled to what they were after just as I did," he thought. Running in with the alarm, and finding the ships out in the offing, the wireless station empty, Ships Bottom crew gone, Bronson was shooting on the first impulse as a grim warning, or to cripple the aéroplane! Crouching beside the rescued aviator, Carlin caught the wind of another bullet coming so close it fanned his cheek.

Carlin was on his feet now, in defiance of the patrol's rifle, swinging his lantern, shouting to Bronson in uncomplimentary language.

Whether Bronson understood or not, the firing from shore ceased. Instead, Carlin saw him make for the

life saving station. "Gone after more ammunition for his Winchester, prob'ly. No! He's got some sense, after all; he's signaling to the Ships Bottom crowd."

As Bronson's Costen light flared up on the beach, the revenue cutter's searchlight swept in over the seas. Carlin saw the lifeboat bowling inshore; then the white glare settled full upon him, lighting up the boiling waters and the big rollers booming in with the sound of guns at sea. The whole quicksand was under water!

**T**RAPPED! That's what they were—marooned on the old ship's spar, cut off by the man killing sea and the greedy quicksand. He glanced up at the dangling yardarm with the first thrill of fear he had known that night. "Let me get a line to a man anywhere, and I'll get him off!" so Casco, keeper of Ships Bottom, boasted in pride of his crew. Subconsciously it had nerved Carlin to his perilous attempt at rescue and salvage. But now—that rotten old Carbonate spar would never hold up the weight of the breeches buoy the Ships Bottom men might shoot out to him. Even if he could rig the tackle with his numbed, half frozen fingers, they would kill him and the helpless airship man, dragging them through that murderous surf.

"The rollers 'ud pound him to death before he'd gone a hundred yards! And we'll freeze to death waiting for the tide to turn!"

He stared at the cluster of lights on the beach, the crew evidently consulting, the lifeboat hauled up, with a sick realization of the terrible trap he had deliberately walked into; but his nerve was not shaken. The quicksand had got him for fair; but Carlin had no notion of giving up—not with that man on his hands as good as dead! That fellow must be kept alive, at any cost!

He pounced on the unconscious aviator. As he worked over him, Carlin pictured the long night ahead. Chilled to the bone, his eyes blinded by the fling of the salt spray, his senses numb with the lethargy of cold, he would soon be helpless, knocked out like that aéroplane smuggler was! What chance had he, anyway?

As he struggled against the growing lethargy, the revenue's searchlight swung over him and away again; but that flash of light showed Carlin the Ships Bottom lifeboat headed out to sea once more. For a moment, in his rage, he doubted his senses.

"Don't Casco know I'm here? What's he taking the boat to sea for?"

Standing there in the white light of the revenue, dazedly staring, he saw a faint glow flooding the group of life savers on the beach. There was no question about those men working! "But what's the fireworks? I must be seeing things this time in earnest."

No! That thin line of fire was a rocket from the beach. It sailed high over him, curving downward to the outer edge of the quicksand. The Ships Bottom men were trying a range over the whole length of the Ships' Graveyard—they wanted the distance. And next moment, big, glowing like an angry comet, the carbide bomb rose from the beach, sped out of the mortar over the same path taken by the test rocket, to seaward where the lifeboat awaited it. Overhead the big, self lighting, line carrying, aerial torpedo sailed, uncoiling from her vitals the white lifeline, leaving it trailing in her wake over the whole length of the quicksand, from beach to outer reef.

Carlin, dazed, cold, despairing, watched. What were they doing with Ships Bottom's big sand wagon? He'd helped drag the white lifeboat on that old sand wagon over miles of beach to a wreck, or launch her through the surf, with the detachable wheels falling away from the boat when the water struck her. The men ashore worked by the light of a blazing tar bucket, taking the sand wagon apart. The forward wheels they made fast to a light wire hawser, slung on the end of a lifeline. The lifeboat already had the seaward end of the line. Presently the pair of wheels, like a bodiless cart on a long rope, shot out over the quicksand, head on for the castaways.

"It's the boat wagon! By George! we'll make it yet! Casco's hauling out part of the boat wagon—the only thing that would cross this mantrap now!"

He sprang up, waving his lantern. The relief of it, the sudden revulsion from despair, fired his blood. And now, with rescue at hand, the injured man's words flashed into his mind, "Caught with the goods!" There was only one place where the smuggled goods could be hidden, and that was in the long cylindrical float, the aéroplane's pontoon that lay now at his feet, its thin metal end nosing the spar. And that loot meant Carlin's vindication! He dropped beside the aviator in a last attempt to rouse him to consciousness—only to spring up again.

**A**BO-OARD the Carb'n't!"

A yell and a hoarse order brought him staring into the mahogany visage of little Tom Welsh, grinning in the glare of the searchlight which the revenue cutter held steadily on the old ship's spar. Welsh, gun firer of Ships Bottom and smallest man of the crew, a dripping figure now in oilskins and sou'easter knotted with red strings, clung to the strange life saving apparatus he rode upon like a yellow bug on the axle of a pair of flat-tired wheels, where he sprawled like a gunner on a caisson.

"What kind o' pink tea you

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One Thing He Knew: They Were Not Handling Him Over Gently.





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## FALSE CHARTERS

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havin' out there, Jack Carlin?" the little life saver demanded. Then, "Well, hang me! If he ain't gone an' ketched the Flyin' Dutchman himself!"

Scrambling on the hummock, Welsh needed no explanation. The few bare inches of firm footing between them and death, the unconscious aviator, the drenched figure of the wireless operator, the fragments of the wrecked aeroplane, all told their own story of disaster. Welsh nodded, with a look at Carlin that did away with comment.

"Get a move!" he said. "The carriage ain't goin' to wait more'n a minute or so in that muck—she's sinkin' now!"

Little Welsh had taken professional charge. Pushing Carlin aside, he had the limp form of the aviator up in his arms and was back to the strange rescue wagon shouting orders as he lashed the body fast.

"Git ready to jump, an' give 'em the haul-in light! Loot's all fast. Ready, Jack?"

Carlin was not ready,—he was thinking of loot himself,—but he had no right to imperil the lives of the others! He sprang back from the sand wagon, swinging his lantern, wigwagging a signal that started the wagon inshore with Welsh roaring anathemas.

Carlin answered with a laugh. "I wasn't goin' to crowd you two off, Tommy," he said. "Just you hustle that hansom cab out here ag'in! And send her empty, you hear? I got some baggage to send ashore."

Welsh's sentiments were lost in the boom of wind and water that drove the sand wagon in faster than she came out; but Carlin saw she held an even keel. He was stiff with cold, his hands bruised and bleeding; but he managed to make his coil of rope fast to the precious cylinder. As he dragged it across the little hummock, the sand wagon came hurtling back.

The Costen lights ashore waved furiously. Carlin grinned when he thought of the life savers' sentiments when they saw the strange fish they had hooked this time. One thing he knew: they were not handling him over gently! The sand wagon pitched and tossed like a junk in a gale, the rollers made a clean sweep over him as he clung on for dear life; but the loot, the precious cylinder cache, was still fast, like a torpedo trying to climb aboard over the stern.

**CAPTAIN CASCO'S** trumpet voice boomed oburgations as the sand wagon shot in a smother of spray through the surf and far up on the beach, hauled to safety by a dozen life savers and revenue jacks.

"Holy mackerel! You bringing in a submarine boat, Jack Carlin? Why didn't you fetch along the Carbonate, spar and all? What are you doing with that tin thing, anyhow—salvage?"

"Salvage be hanged!" Carlin shouted. "I don't know what you found on that ship; but I've got the whole game of those fellows coppered. They got you bullies off with fake S. O. S. calls, just to make trouble for you, that's what they did! Had it all fixed to send in aeroplanes packed full of smuggled loot when the coast was clear—that's what that up to date smuggling crowd's been putting over on Uncle Sam and Ships Bottom! Oh, I've got the goods on 'em to make 'em squeal! If the aviator chap can't or won't talk, I'll choke it out of that wireless

operator! You let me get my hands on him!"

A roar of laughter went up from the surfmen. "The whole bunch is over in the station," Casco said, choking. "Come along. We'll see you manhandle that operator."

Carlin was not expecting this reception, and he was mad clear through. Choked with brine, dripping, mud stained, and disreputable, he pushed his way through the grinning men crowding round Ships Bottom Station.

"I'm Operator Carlin, charge of the wireless here," he brusquely told the revenue officer who confronted him in the doorway. "I want that ship's operator who's been playing hob with Ships Bottom and my wireless!"

The officer stared, then joined in the chuckle that went round. "Help yourself, Son," he said, and moved aside.

Carlin sprang inside—and pulled up short. A slight figure in the uniform cap of the Ships' Wireless Service was smiling up at him. A girl!

"I'm real sorry about those S. O. S. calls," she said contritely. "This was my first Ships' Service. Until tonight, I thought they were only sending in code signals. Then I tried to warn you. I'm afraid I've made you trouble."

Trouble! Carlin gasped. His job and his reputation in jeopardy,—branded as a crook by Ships Bottom crew, from Captain down; facing death on the quicksand, half frozen; shot at with rifle and torpedo bomb; dragged through the surf,—he should think she had made trouble! But the gray eyes were appealing, and the red lips drooped disconsolately.

"Oh, don't mention it!" he said gallantly. "I don't mind the trouble—now."

**WHEN** those fake S. O. S. calls came in I figured it must be coast smugglers. They'd be bound to try to beat the wireless beach patrol, makin' us so much trouble, if nothing else, till we quit," Carlin said later, when commendation came from headquarters for that night's work. "I guess when they sent in that aeroplane was the first time they really wanted to get Ships Bottom crew out of the way; but they made their mistake when they tried to ring in that young lady operator. When she saw what was up, she naturally tried to warn me. She felt about smuggling just like I did. If it hadn't been for her, that salvage would be boring down to China by this time—"

Carlin stopped confused. Casco's grin aggravated him, somehow.

"Sure!" the big life Captain said. "I reckon you got some interest in that tin can full o' mixed salvage yourself now, seein' you know so much about the way the young lady feels. Folks mostly do, thinkin' o' matrimony," Casco said consolingly. "One thing's certain," he added hastily, noting the guilty flush on Carlin's face, "in all my experience on Barnegat wreckin' beach, I never did think I'd rig a sand wagon for a breeches buoy to a flying ship to ketch a smuggler."

Carlin laughed. "You're the man who said we'd never catch a smuggler by just talkin' wireless to him," he chuckled. "You can have the credit for the capture, of course, and your share of that valuable bunch of smuggled stuff—I guess I'm satisfied with my part of the loot!"

## THE NEW ELDORADO

**RECENT** discussion relative to the great material wealth of Alaska makes it something more than ordinarily interesting to know just what this wonderful territory represents. Late information, regarded as thoroughly trustworthy by persons in position to judge of the matter, discloses the following interesting facts:

Alaska is a greater gold field than California.

Alaska would make nearly five hundred States as large as Rhode Island.

Alaska has the greatest fishing waters in the world.

Alaska has more coal than Pennsylvania, including the anthracite region.

Alaska has the only tin mines of any consequence in the United States.

Alaska has 590,884 square miles, 378,165,760 acres.

Alaska is more than twice the size of the German Empire.

Alaska is nearly thirteen times the size of New York State.

Alaska has more copper than Michigan and Arizona together.

Alaska is something more than one-fifth the size of the United States proper.

Alaska has paid for itself twenty times over, in fish alone. The purchase price was seven million two hundred thousand dollars—less than two cents an acre.

Alaska has already paid for itself twenty times over in gold and silver.

Alaska has the greatest cattle and sheep ranges in America.

Alaska has the highest mountain, McKinley, in the country. Its height is 20,464 feet.

Alaska is larger than all the States north of the Ohio and Potomac rivers and east of the Mississippi.

Alaska is in the same latitude as Sweden, Norway, and Finland, has a much better climate, more fertile land, and is much larger than all three of these countries put together.

Alaska, in brief, is the Eldorado of the Far North, and the development of its vast resources has hardly yet begun, nor have all its possibilities been discovered. There is its great wealth of forest and quarries, and deposits of valuable clays, still untouched by commerce, and representing multiplied millions of dollars. What all these undeveloped possibilities mean to the future, who can say?

—J. H. Rockwell.



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